

Acton Nursing Services Task Force

Meeting Minutes

March 17, 2015

Task Force Members Present:	Ellen Feinsand, Brenda Gowing, Mike Gowing (BOS Liaison), Charlie Kadlec, Adrian Hancock, Marge Kennedy, Florence Ross, Howard Sussman,
Guests:	Ann Chang (member of the public)
Members Absent:	Dick Calendrella (Associate), Pamela Harting – Barrat, Heather York (Town Liaison)
Task Force Charge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Creating a Network Development plan* resulting in increased referrals and reimbursement.▪ Creating a marketing and communication plan to increase exposure▪ <i>Developing a report for Town Meeting presentation to apprise citizens of Task Force status and progress toward achieving the stated objective, (deferred)</i>▪ Proposing a standing Task Force structure

Formalities

Facilitated by: Charlie Kadlec, Chair

Minutes for both the 03.03.2015 meetings were approved.

Mr. Sussman identified issues receiving documents through his EarthLink account (particularly with Google addresses) and offered to provide a different email address for the shell.

Confirmed quorum.

Action Items: Mrs. Gowing will coordinate posting of approved minutes with the Town Clerk's office.

Chairmen's Update and Finance Workgroup

Presented by: Charlie Kadlec

Members reviewed the outstanding action item of assigning FAQ ownership. Although the FAQ is "owned" by the Task Force as a whole, Mrs. Gowing will be the keeper of comments and most recent versions of the FAQ document under the auspices of being the committee clerk. Clarified that all members may contribute to the FAQ. (Please read below for additional discussion relevant to Town Meeting.)

After a review of promotional material and potential handouts (see the FANS update below for additional detail) Mr. Kadlec reviewed extensive financial research.

ANS actual yearly operating results for the last fifteen years (FY 2000 to FY 2014) have been calculated from Department of Revenue data for the Nursing Enterprise Fund and FY 2010 to FY 2014 information from the Finance Department. The results are quite different from the numbers previously available and reported at the 400K deficit that was reported at the Special Town Meeting From Fiscal Year (FY) 2000 to FY 2009, the average yearly deficit was less than \$17K. The yearly deficits increased in FY 2010 and FY 2011 but decreased significantly in FY 2012 and FY 2013. The results for FY 2014 are an anomaly -- due to billing problems, revenues for FY 2014 were very low. All Enterprise Fund accounts are "cash basis" which is a special problem for the Nursing Services -- their expenses are mostly salaries and benefits, and therefore essentially current, but the revenues are inherently delayed by processing of considerable paperwork and a lengthy approval process. The billing problems are being resolved, the FY 2015 results will provide more realistic information.

ANSTF also received data from the Town Accountant about funds available to ANS from grants and donations, which are held in separate accounts. These funds are used to cover the costs of services for Acton residents who are unable to pay and other such needs as determined by the ANS Director. Further information will be needed to identify specific costs of services and related revenues to guide future marketing plans.

Conclusions: Essentially, the ANSTF should answer the question, "Is there an imbalance or not between incoming and outgoing funds, and if that imbalance is positive or negative."

Action Items:	Person Responsible:	Deadline:
Mr. Kadlec will send a summary report to the Board of Selectman and the Finance Committee	Mr. Kadlec	By Next Meeting, 03/31/2015
Clarify ownership of FAQ	Mrs. Gowing	Completed

Financial Review Subtopic: Out of Town Care

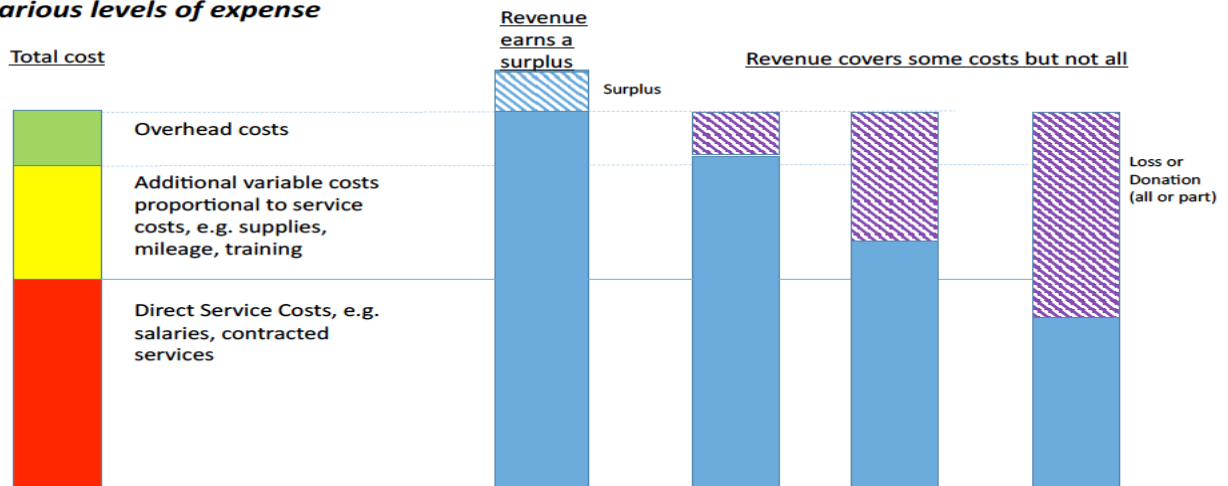
Task Force Members

Historically, out town care has been provided on a limited basis. For example, ANS provided care to a former Acton resident with cancer that was placed out-of-town but still required home care. This allowed for continuity of care for the Acton resident. Although provision of care costs is typically covered by insurance, there are questions as to coverage of operational costs (e.g., administrative services, plant costs) and use of the “free care” bank. Further questions arose as to the relationship with the town of Stow, since Acton has a contractual relationship with Stow to provide Public Health services. Mrs. Ross also noted that there are times that public health nursing responsibilities overlap with ANS Home Care services.

Although out of town care is limited, there is both concern and a lack of clarity about costs. The Task force needs to confirm and clarify the costs of ANS services by specific type (nursing, PT, OT) and by location (in town or out-of town.) There also needs to be a fuller understanding of how “overhead” costs are covered when rendering care to out-of-town residents, A better understanding of overhead costs for non-residents would help set appropriate reimbursement rates so that the Town of Acton is not “subsidizing” non-resident care.

Mr. Hancock “whiteboarded” a chart to help clarify the fact gathering needs

Cost and revenue analyses will show which services make surpluses and which cover various levels of expense



Action Items:	Person Responsible:	Deadline:
Request additional data from Acting Nursing Services as to provision of care costs and reimbursement rates	Deferred until Mrs. York's return.	TBD

ANS Director Update

Mrs. York

Deferred due to absence

FAQs about the ANS

Mr. Hancock

(Discussion resumed in accordance with the Agenda.)

When considering the FAQ gathering process, there will be facts that the ANSTF needs to make decisions (internal) and information that may benefit the public (external.) For example, it will be helpful to validate that all citizens, regardless of age, are eligible for the service. FAQs about the Top 1\$ Quality rating may have an external face (e.g., a marketing statement) and an internal component (e.g., detailed information about how the status was achieved. There was significant debate about the release of FAQs in time for town meeting, in addition to the testimonial handout. It was decided to review options more fully at the next

ANSTF meeting.

Action Items:	Person Responsible:	Deadline:
Confirm and clarify FAQ approval process for general release	Task Force Members	TBD

Workgroup Reports and Discussion

ANSTF Members

Given time constraints, focus was placed on Referral Source contacts. Ms. Feinsand talked about the importance of remedying the “awareness deficit.” ANTSF reviewed the benefits of gathering baseline information. Questions could include, “How does one get onto the referral list?” or “Are you aware there is a ‘hometown’ VNA available?”

Reviewed the value of building relationship and increased awareness through periodic, routine contacts with referral sources. Basic quality of interaction questions (e.g., “how did the service work out for you” or “is there something we could do better?”) can do much to increase referrals overall.

Although there is high interest in beginning outreach calls, the ANSTF will need to verify town approvals required. There is also a question as to which the responsibility will fall, specifically, are there appropriate town staff that can make or be trained to make referral calls.

Conclusion:

Contacting referral sources, to increase awareness of the ANS is different than actively negotiating contracts (network development) or creating relationship (Provider Relations.) There is enough data available to develop an initial outreach approach.

Action Items:	Person Responsible:	Deadline:
Discuss options for a phased Referral contact approach.	ANSTF members	Continuing

Fans of the Acton Nursing Services Liaison

Lead: Florence Ross

Mrs. Ross provided a display of available “giveaway” marketing objects, including car decals and first aid kits. In addition to the give-aways, FANS reps can also hand out brochures and materials. Members agreed that testimonials and the previously approved COA paragraph could be used as a one-page handout. Release of FAQs and/or additional information would require vetting and approval.

Action Items:	Person Responsible:	Deadline:
Integrate COA paragraph and testimonials into a single document	Mrs. Gowing	By 3/27/2015
Consider ANSTF members participation in manning the table at ATM	Task Force Members	Continuing

Town Website/Website Opportunities

Charlie Kadlec

No response as yet (likely due to town meeting.)

Action Items:	Person Responsible:	Deadline:
Update Town Website	Town of Acton IT	Post Town Meeting

Agenda Items for Next Meeting and Adjournment.

Lead: Charlie Kadlac

- Confirm materials for FAN table handouts at the Annual Town Meeting
- Assess readiness for contacting referral sources (initial messages)
- Confirm overhead costs (staff, administration) for rendering out of town care

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenda Gowing

Clerk, Acton Nursing Service Task Force (ANSTF)